



TIME AND TIME AGAIN!



664

APR 91

US \$1.00
CAN \$1.25
UK 50P

1991

12



SUPERMAN IN ACTION

BY
STERN &
MCLEOD



DON'T
MISS
SUPERMAN
NO. 55
IN 2
WEEKS!

LOOK!

UP IN THE
SKY! IT'S...

SUPERMAN

Created by
JERRY Siegel &
JOE Shuster

ONCE AGAIN THIS
STRANGE BEING
FROM ANOTHER
PLANET RETURNS
TO EARTH...

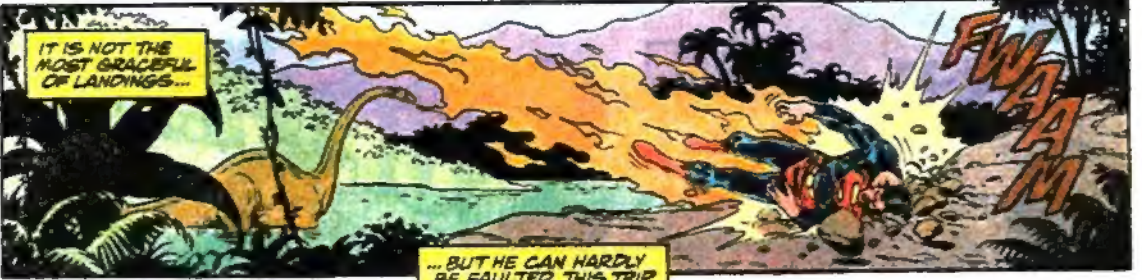
...BUT NOT
THE EARTH
HE KNOWS.

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WRITER
BOB MCLEOD
ARTIST
BILL OAKLEY
LETTERER
GLENN WHITMORE
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DAN THORSLAND
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MIKE CARLIN
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MANY LONG YEARS AGO...

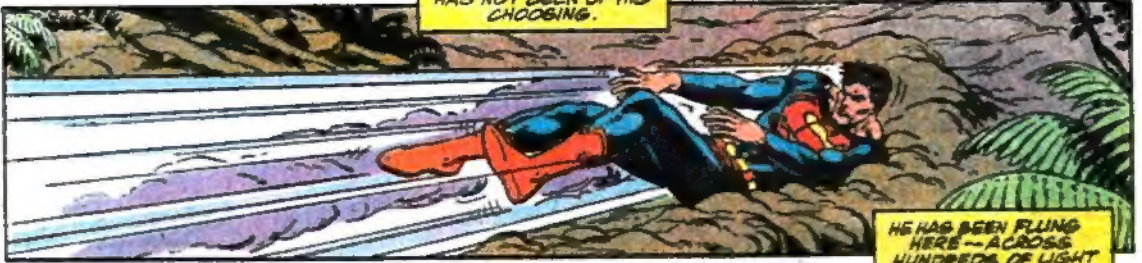
TIME & TIME AGAIN

PHASE FIVE

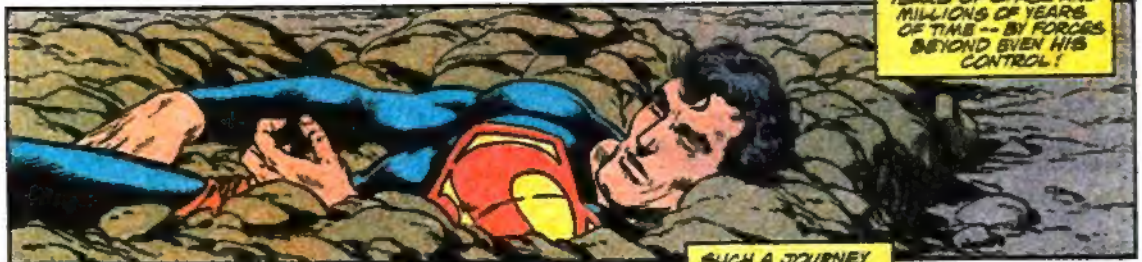


IT IS NOT THE
MOST GRACEFUL
OF LANDINGS...

... BUT HE CAN HARDLY
BE FAULTED THIS TRIP
HAS NOT BEEN OF HIS
CHOOSING.



HE HAS BEEN FLUNG
HERE -- ACROSS
HUNDREDS OF LIGHT
YEARS OF SPACE AND
MILLIONS OF YEARS
OF TIME -- BY FORCES
BEYOND EVEN HIS
CONTROL!



SUCH A JOURNEY
WOULD DESTROY
A LESSER MAN.

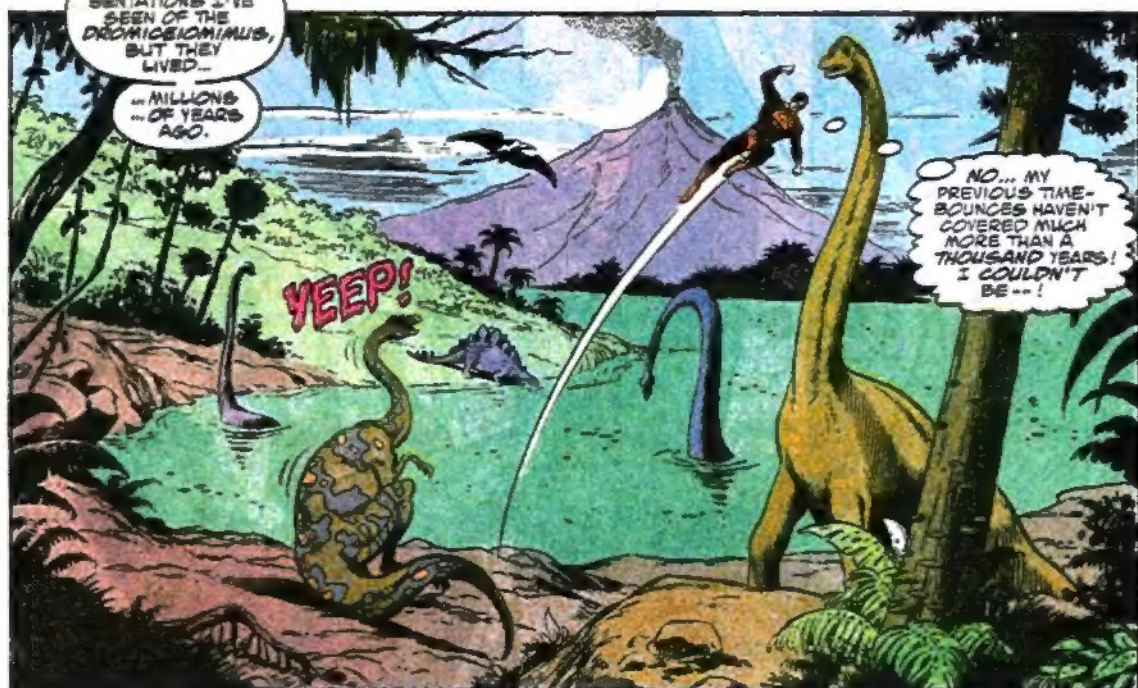


EVEN FOR A SUPER-MAN,
IT IS AN EXHAUSTING
ORDEAL.

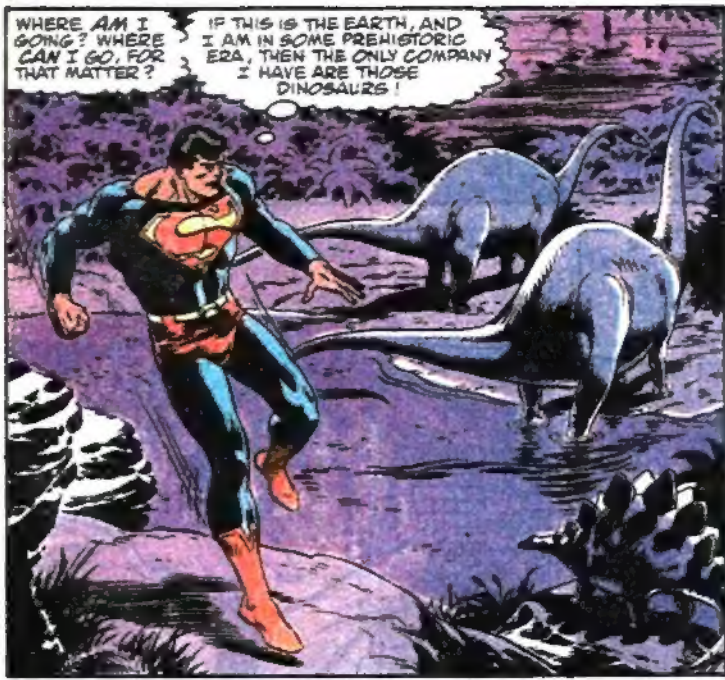


SNIF
SNIF?

EH? DID
IT WORK?
DID WE
GET--?







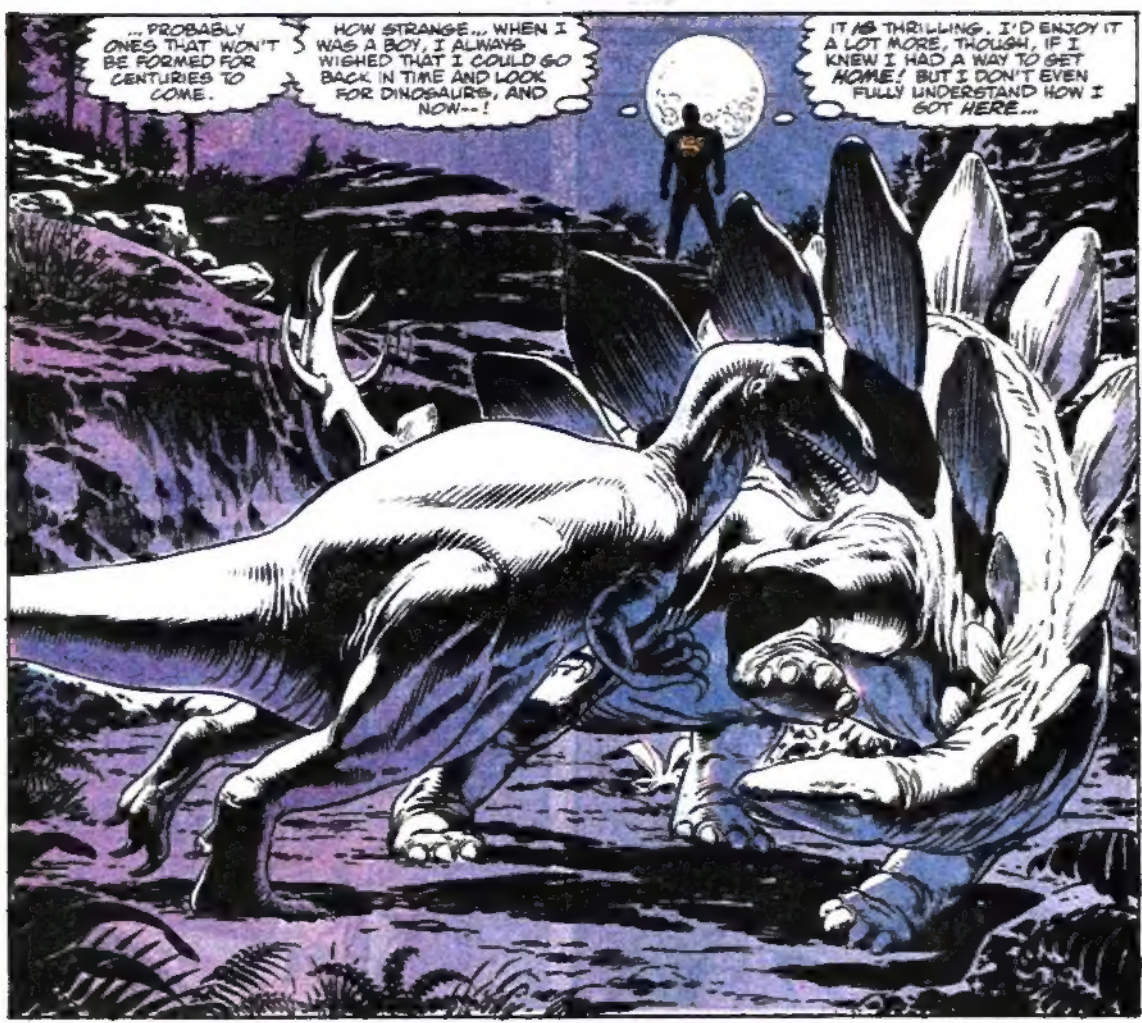
WHERE AM I GOING? WHERE CAN I GO, FOR THAT MATTER?

IF THIS IS THE EARTH, AND I AM IN SOME PREHISTORIC ERA, THEN THE ONLY COMPANY I HAVE ARE THOSE DINOSAURS!



THERE'S CONFIRMATION OF WHERE I AM... THAT'S THE EARTH'S MOON, ALL RIGHT.

IT'S MISSING A FEW CRATERS, THOUGH...



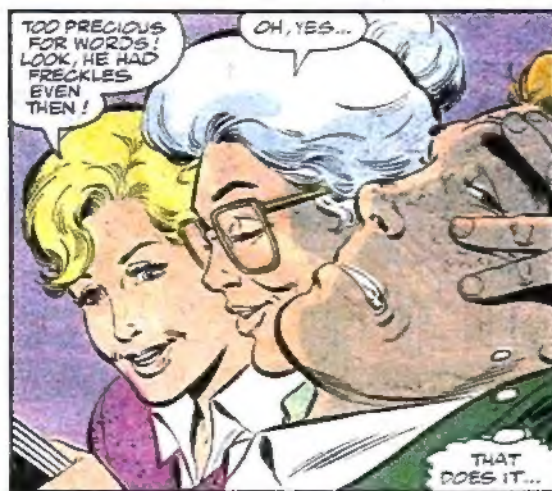
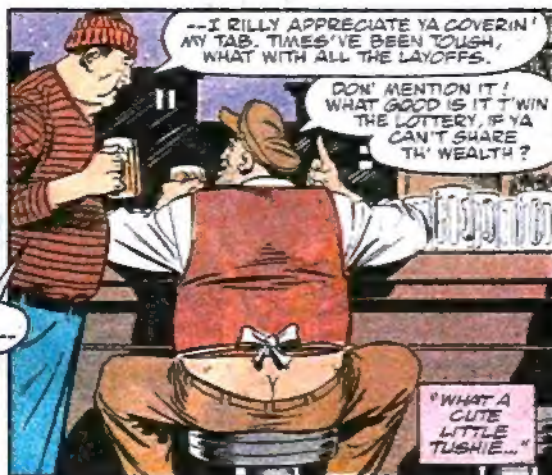
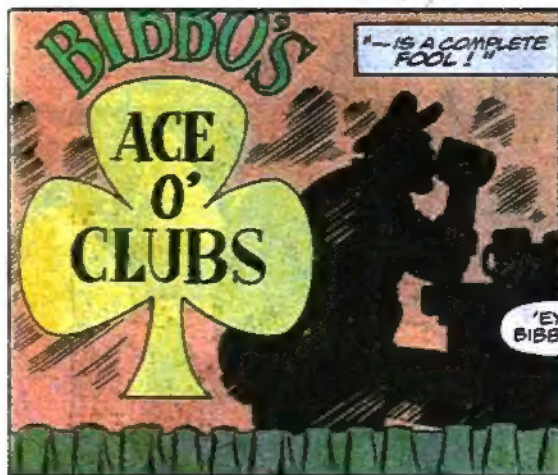
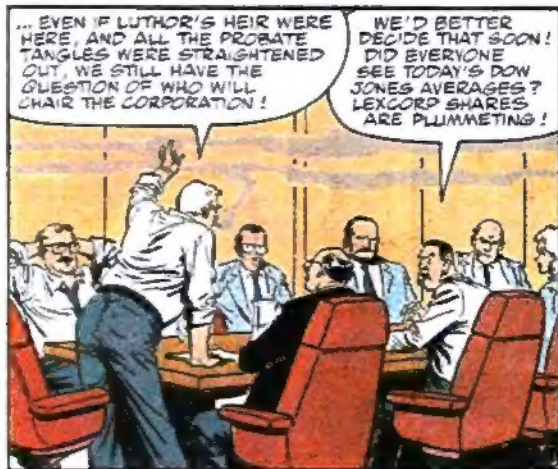
...PROBABLY ONES THAT WON'T BE FORMED FOR CENTURIES TO COME.

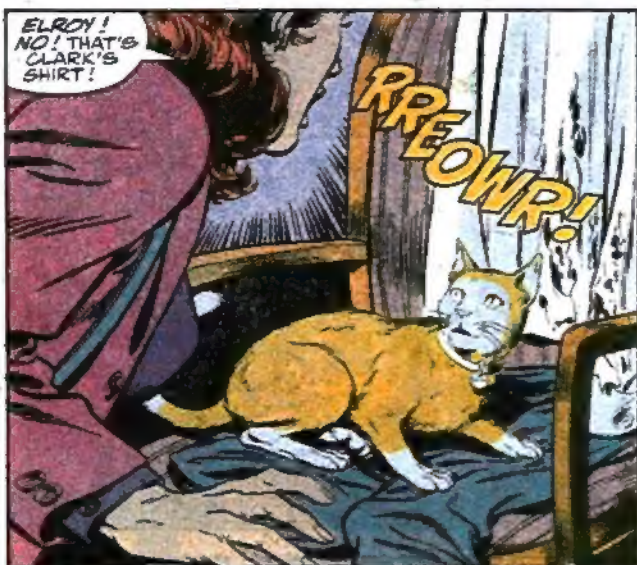
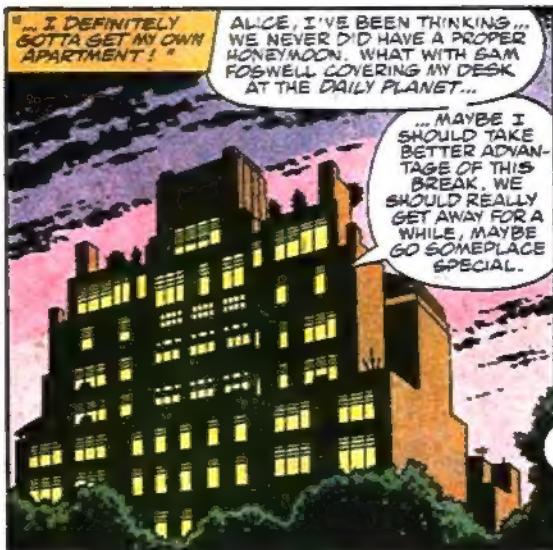
HOW STRANGE... WHEN I WAS A BOY, I ALWAYS WISHED THAT I COULD GO BACK IN TIME AND LOOK FOR DINOSAURS, AND NOW--!

IT IS THRILLING. I'D ENJOY IT A LOT MORE, THOUGH, IF I KNEW I HAD A WAY TO GET HOME! BUT I DON'T EVEN FULLY UNDERSTAND HOW I GOT HERE...

"...AND HOME IS THOUSANDS OF MILLENNIA AWAY..."

OBVIOUSLY, WE ARE IN A STICKY SITUATION...





"... I WISH I KNEW WHERE YOU ARE ! "

♪...EVERY-BODY
WALK THE
DIN-O-SAUR!

YURR!

BZZZ

LIKE THAT
TUNE, DO YOU, DROM?
I'M SURE 'WAS NOT 'WAS'
WOULD BE PLEASED.

IT WON'T BE ON
THE CHARTS FOR...
OH... 100 MILLION
YEARS OR SO.

WHOA!
HUNGRY,
FELLA?

ZZZZT

WELL, I DON'T
BLAME YOU. I'M
FEELING A BIT
PECKISH MYSELF.

I DON'T CARE MUCH
FOR PREHISTORIC
DRAGONFLIES, THOUGH.
MY TASTES RUN MORE
TOWARDS...

...THOSE BIG,
JUICY RED
FRUITS!

CARE
TO JOIN
ME?

GEEEEE!

I THOUGHT
YOU MIGHT!

OPEN
WIDE,
DROM--

--HERE
IT COMES!

YEAH,
YOU LIKE
THAT, DON'T
YOU?

AH, DROMIE,
YOU'RE A JEWEL!
YOU'VE HELPED ME
KEEP MY SANITY,
THESE LAST FEW
WEEKS.

IF ONLY
YOU COULD
TALK--!

HELLLLPP!

WHAT IN
THE--?

THAT WAS
A SCREAM...
A HUMAN
SCREAM...IN
ENGLISH!

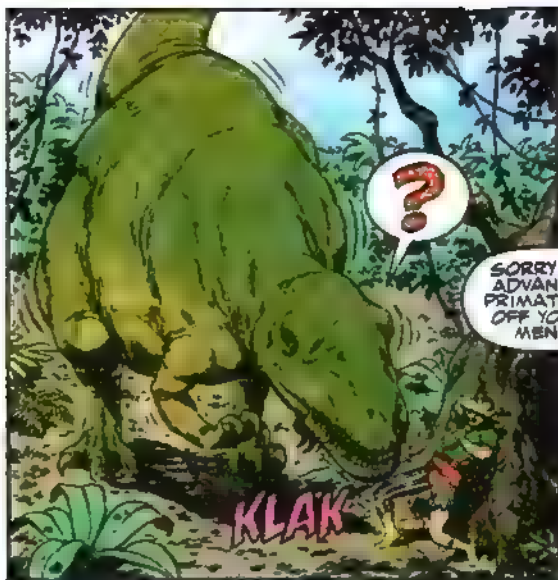
BUT
HOW?!

"AND, BETTER YET, WHO?"

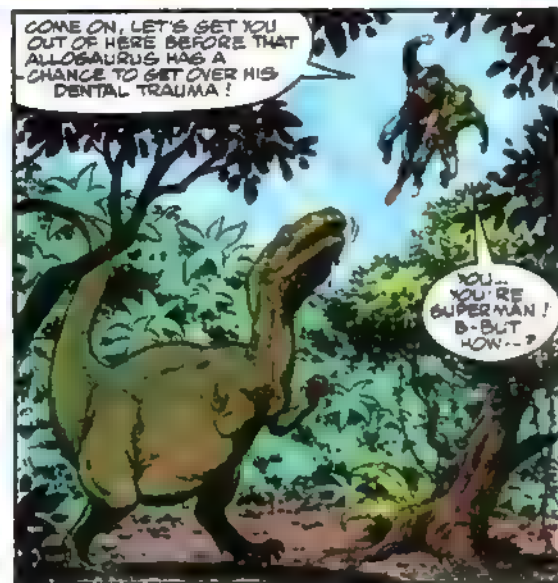
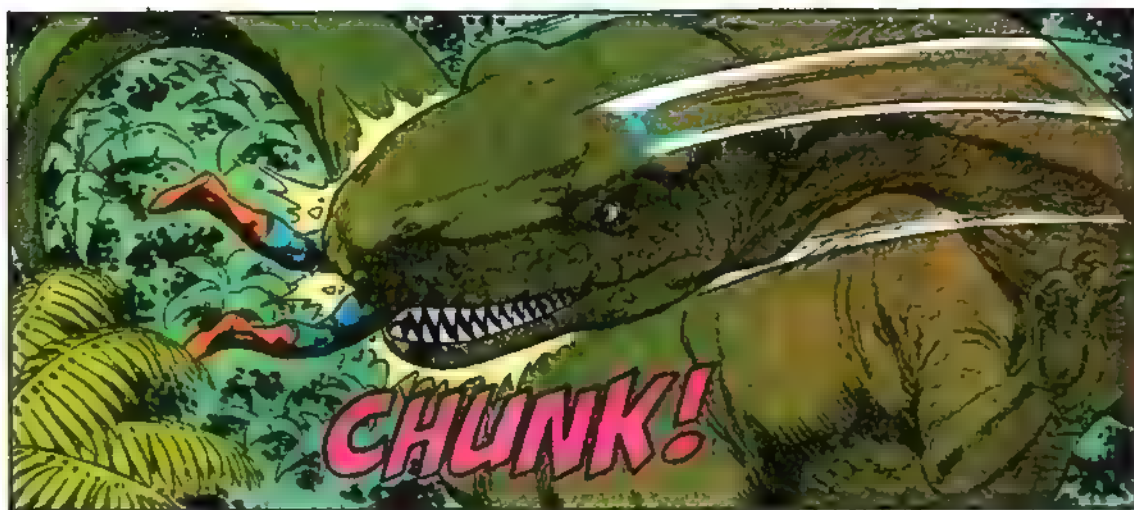
ARROO!

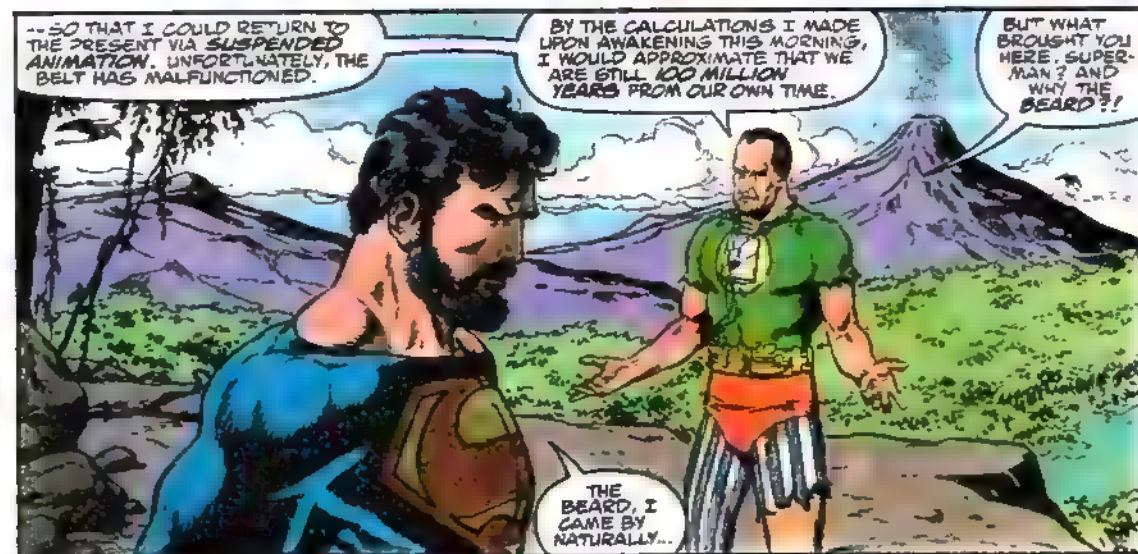
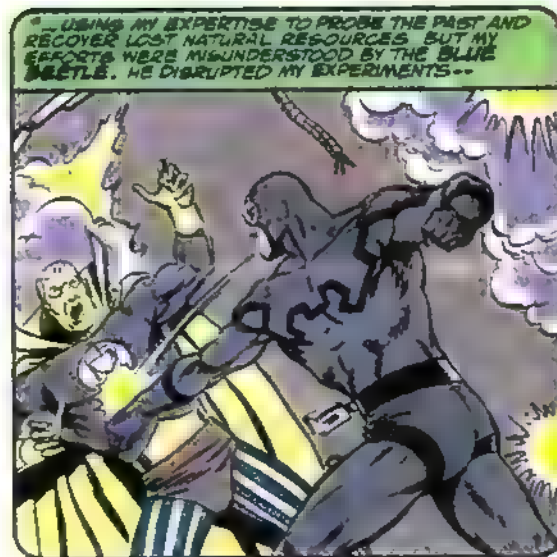
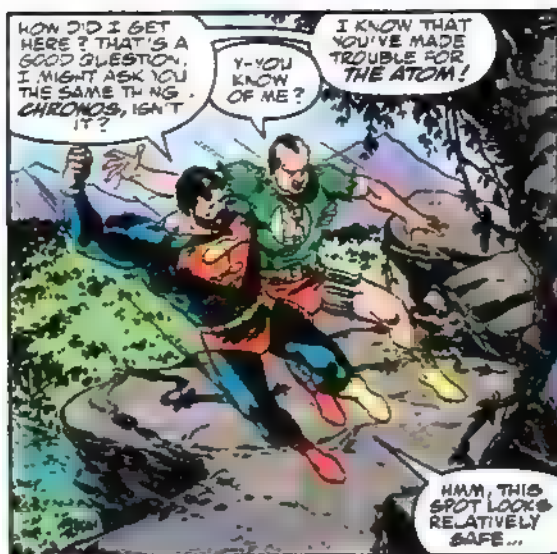
NO! GET
AWAY FROM
ME!

FOR GOD'S
SAKE, GET
AWAY!

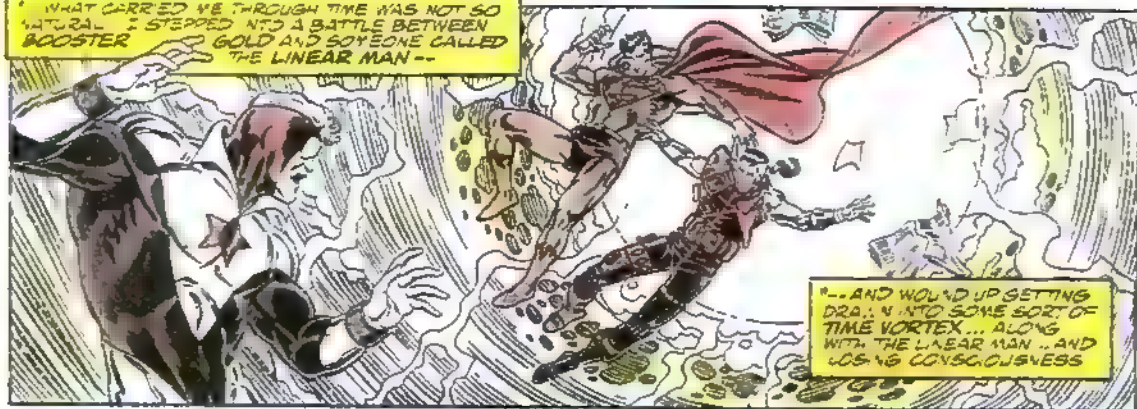


SORRY, BUT
ADVANCED
PRIMATE IS
OFF YOUR
MENU!



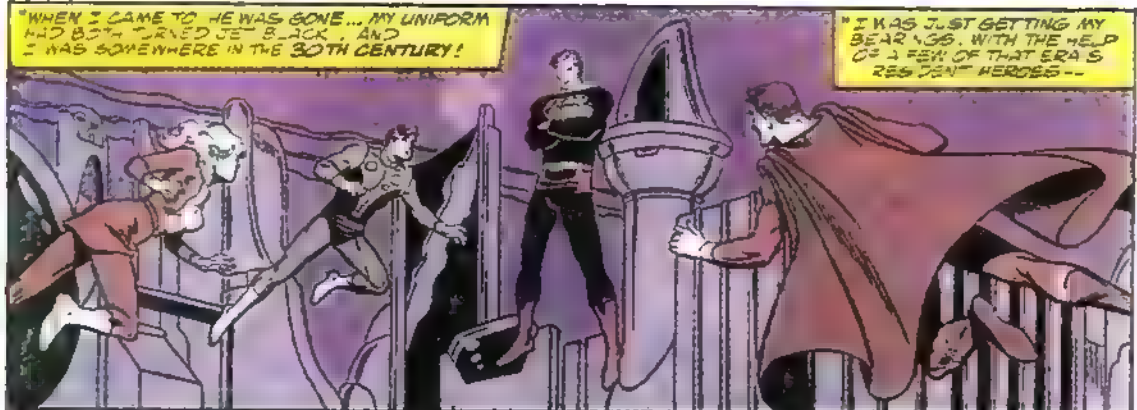


"WHAT CARRIED ME THROUGH TIME WAS NOT SO NATURAL. I STEPPED INTO A BATTLE BETWEEN BOOSTER GOLD AND SOMEONE CALLED THE LINEAR MAN--



"...AND WOULD UP GETTING DRAWN INTO SOME SORT OF TIME VORTEX... ALONG WITH THE LINEAR MAN... AND LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS

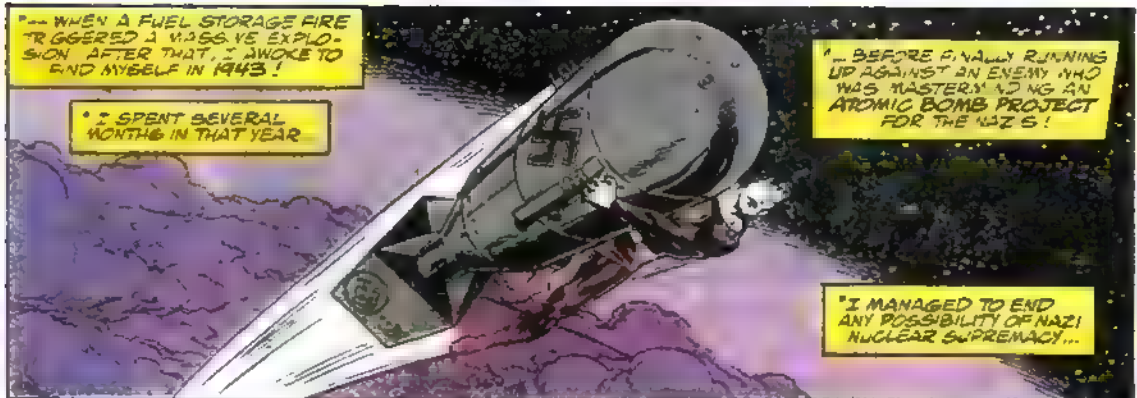
"WHEN I CAME TO, HE WAS GONE... MY UNIFORM HAD BOTH TURNED OFF-BLACK AND I WAS SOMEWHERE IN THE 30TH CENTURY!



"I WAS JUST GETTING MY BEARINGS, WITH THE HELP OF A FEW OF THAT ERA'S RESIDENT HEROES--

"-- WHEN A FUEL STORAGE FIRE TRIGGERED A MASSIVE EXPLOSION. AFTER THAT, I AWOKE TO FIND MYSELF IN 1943!

"I SPENT SEVERAL MONTHS IN THAT YEAR



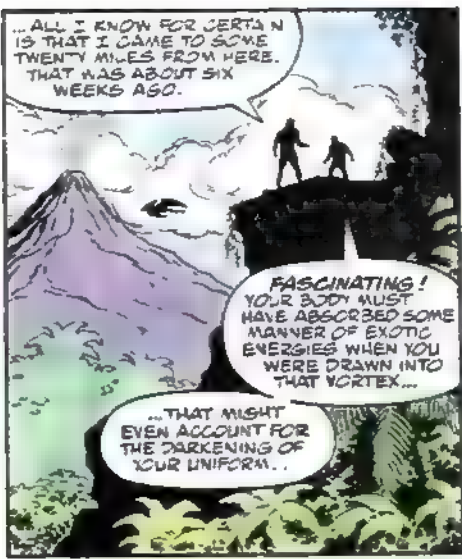
"... BEFORE FINALLY RUNNING UP AGAINST AN ENEMY WHO WAS MASTERMINDING AN ATOMIC BOMB PROJECT FOR THE NAZIS!

"I MANAGED TO END ANY POSSIBILITY OF NAZI NUCLEAR SUPREMACY...

"... BUT THE ENSUING EXPLOSION KNOCKED ME BACK INTO THE 30TH CENTURY! I MET THAT LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES ONCE AGAIN AND AIDED THEM IN STOPPING A STAR-DEVOURING MONSTER



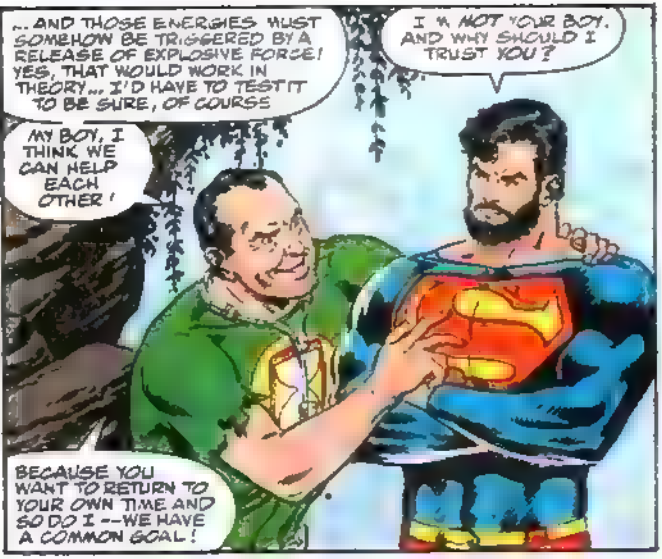
"THAT EPISODE ENDED IN YET ANOTHER EXPLOSION... AT LEAST, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL



...ALL I KNOW FOR CERTAIN IS THAT I CAME TO SOME TWENTY MILES FROM HERE. THAT WAS ABOUT SIX WEEKS AGO.

FASCINATING! YOUR BODY MUST HAVE ABSORBED SOME MANNER OF EXOTIC ENERGIES WHEN YOU WERE DRAWN INTO THAT VORTEX...

...THAT MIGHT EVEN ACCOUNT FOR THE DARKENING OF YOUR UNIFORM...

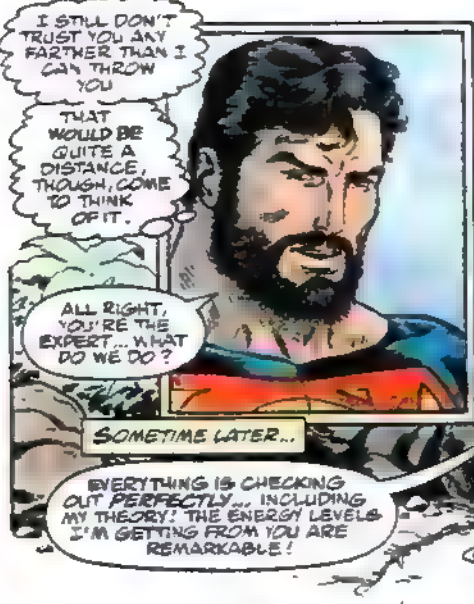


...AND THOSE ENERGIES MUST SOMEHOW BE TRIGGERED BY A RELEASE OF EXPLOSIVE FORCE! YES, THAT WOULD WORK IN THEORY... I'D HAVE TO TEST IT TO BE SURE, OF COURSE

I'M NOT YOUR BOY. AND WHY SHOULD I TRUST YOU?

MY BOY, I THINK WE CAN HELP EACH OTHER!

BECAUSE YOU WANT TO RETURN TO YOUR OWN TIME AND SO DO I --WE HAVE A COMMON GOAL!



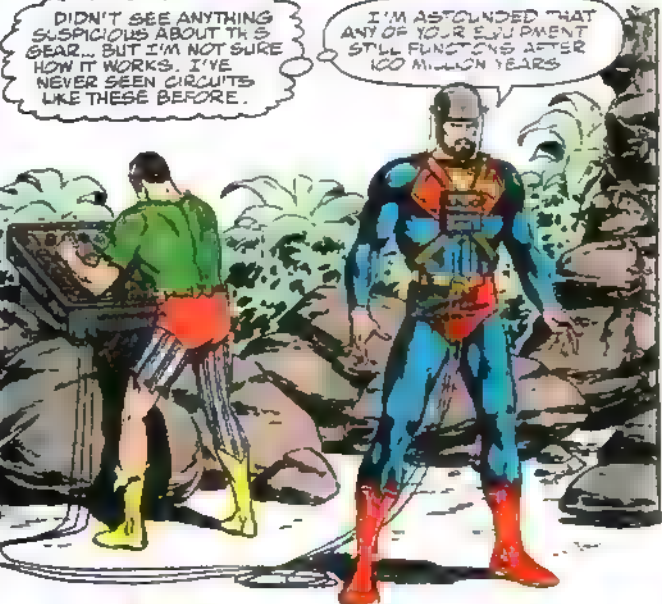
I STILL DON'T TRUST YOU ANY FARTHER THAN I CAN THROW YOU

THAT WOULD BE QUITE A DISTANCE, THOUGH, COME TO THINK OF IT.

ALL RIGHT, YOU'RE THE EXPERT... WHAT DO WE DO?

SOMETIME LATER...

EVERYTHING IS CHECKING OUT PERFECTLY... INCLUDING MY THEORY! THE ENERGY LEVELS I'M GETTING FROM YOU ARE REMARKABLE!



DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THIS GEAR... BUT I'M NOT SURE HOW IT WORKS. I'VE NEVER SEEN CIRCUITS LIKE THESE BEFORE.

I'M ASTONISHED THAT ANY OF YOUR EQUIPMENT STILL FUNCTIONS AFTER 100 MILLION YEARS



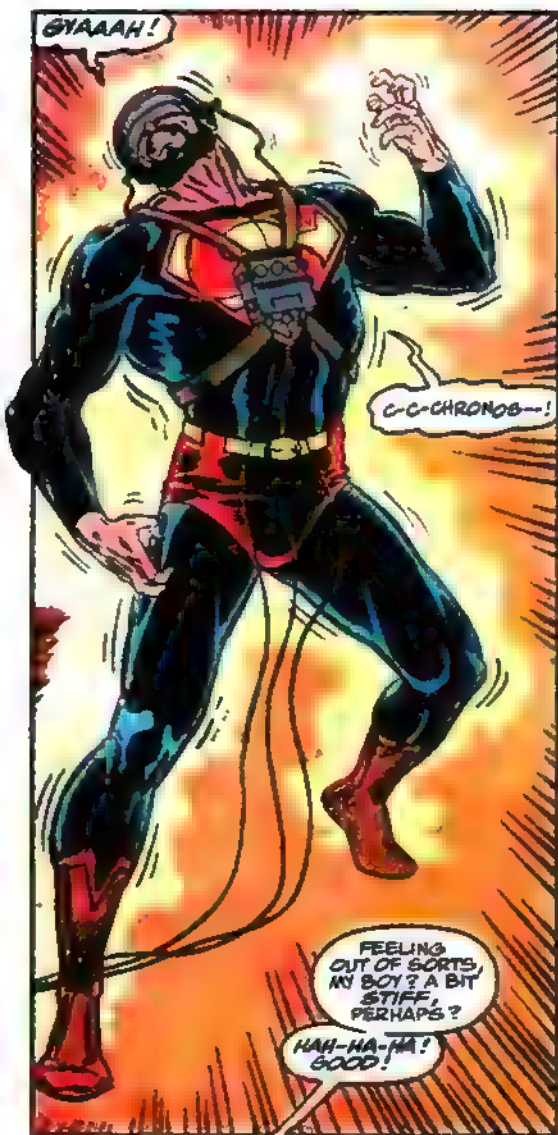
IT ALL FELL WITHIN THE FIELD OF MY STASIS BELT - BUT IT MATTERS LITTLE NOW!

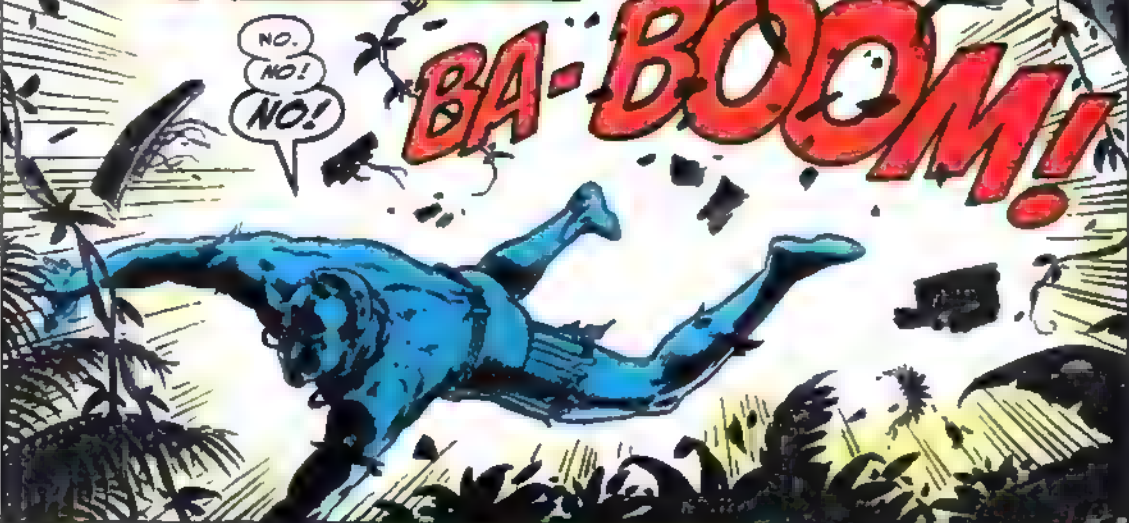
THIS GEAR MAY BE JURY-RIGGED, BUT I'M CERTAIN THAT IT CAN CHANNEL YOUR BODY'S CHRONAL ENERGIES INTO A CONTROLLABLE TIME-JUMP!

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME...

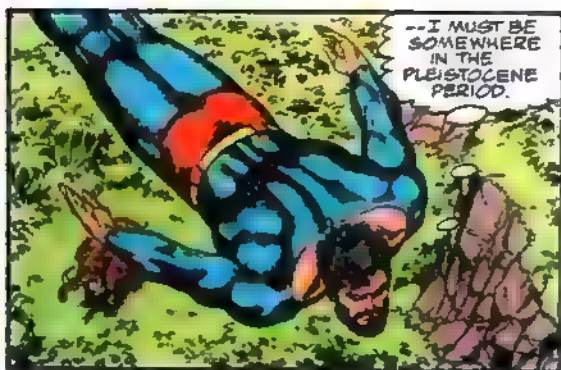
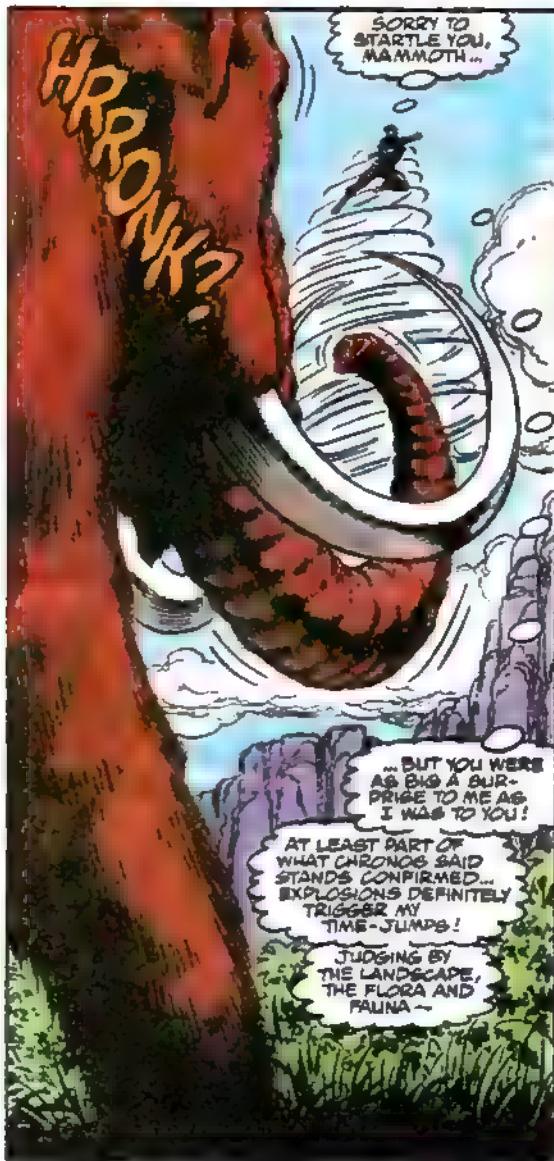
...BUT I'M STILL KEEPING AN EYE ON YOU

READY WHEN YOU ARE









FROM WHAT I WAS TOLD BY ONE OF ITS SURVIVORS, A'R'IVEN WAS THE HOME OF A HIGHLY ADVANCED HUMANOID RACE CALLED THE H'V'LER'NI.

SOMETIME DURING THIS PERIOD, THE H'V'LER'NI WERE DECIMATED BY A VIRULENT PLAGUE AND FLED THE EARTH...

...ALL EXCEPT FOR 500 HOLD-OUTS WHO PLUGGED THEIR MINDS INTO A HUGE ROBOTIC HOST-BODY, WAITING FOR THE DAY WHEN THEY COULD TAKE OVER NEW BODIES... AND THE WORLD.*

*AS REVEALED IN THE NOW-CLASSIC SUPERMAN #6.

IF THE LAST 500 WERE ANY EXAMPLE, THE H'V'LER'NI'S ADVANCEMENT WAS PRETTY MUCH LIMITED TO THEIR TECHNOLOGY.

I HAD TO STOP THE MOST BEFORE THEY COULD SUBJUGATE MY EARTH.

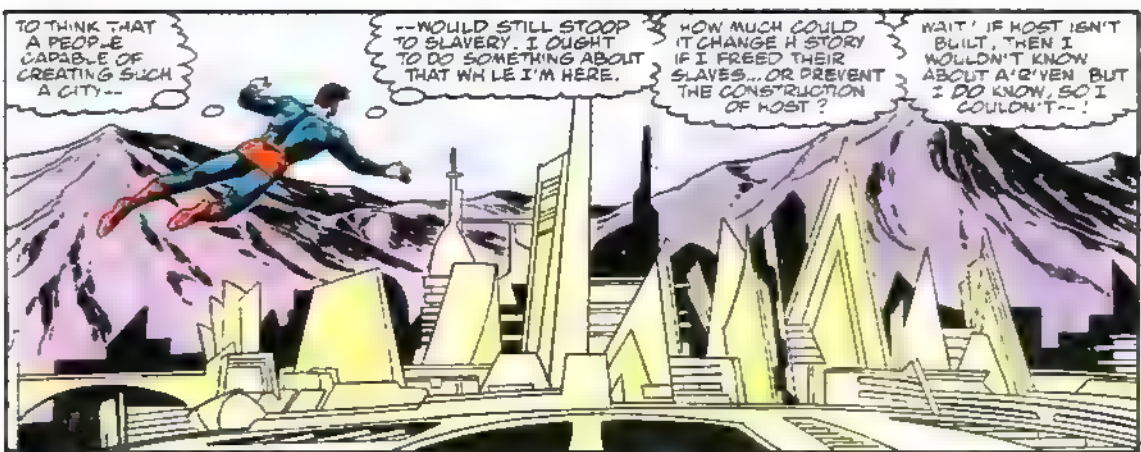
AND I KNOW THAT THEIR SOCIETY THOUGHT NOTHING OF ENSLAVING LOCAL TRIBES OF HOMO ERECTUS... OR EXTERMINATING THEM WHEN THEY PROVED TO BE CARRYING THE PLAGUE.

LET'S SEE, NOW...

...CURRENT GEOGRAPHY IS A GOOD DEAL DIFFERENT FROM HOW IT WILL APPEAR IN MY TIME, BUT...

...YES THERE IT IS... A'R'IVEN

IMPRESSIVE



TO THINK THAT A PEOPLE CAPABLE OF CREATING SUCH A CITY--

--WOULD STILL STOOP TO SLAVERY. I OUGHT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT WHILE I'M HERE.

HOW MUCH COULD IT CHANGE A STORY IF I FREED THEIR SLAVES...OR PREVENT THE CONSTRUCTION OF KOST?

WAIT! IF KOST ISN'T BUILT, THEN I WOULDN'T KNOW ABOUT A'R'YVEN BUT I DO KNOW, SO I COULDN'T--!

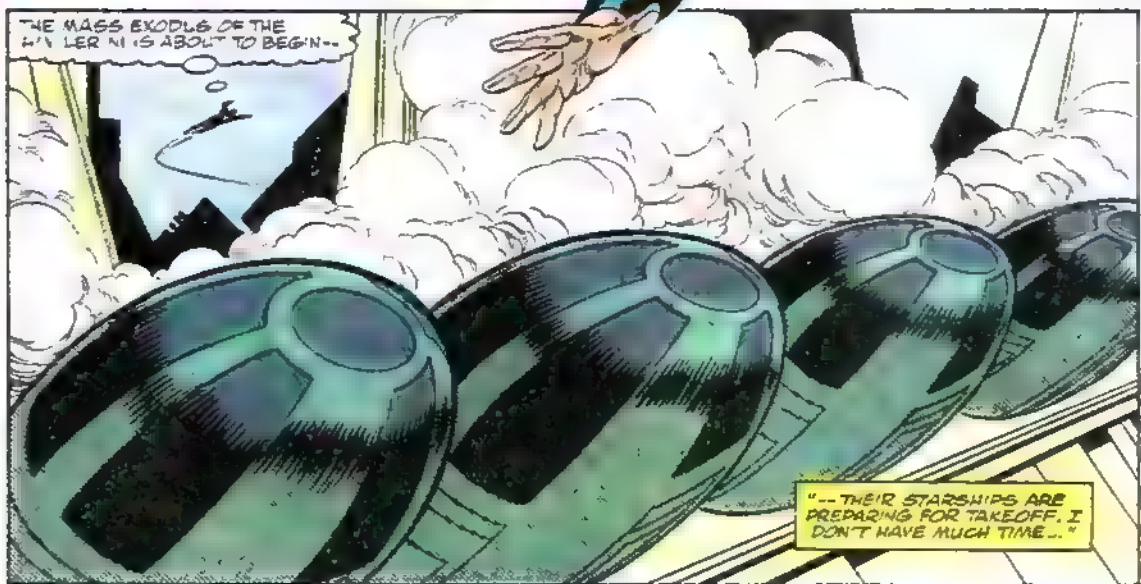


EH? WHAT'S THAT SMOKE RISING FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CITY?



OH, GOD. FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS, I'M TOO LATE TO HELP THE SLAVES--

--AND MAYBE TOO LATE TO HELP MYSELF--!



THE MASS EXODUS OF THE H'Y LER NI IS ABOUT TO BEGIN--

"--THEIR STARSHIPS ARE PREPARING FOR TAKEOFF. I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME..."

...I HAVE TO
POSITION
MYSELF
UNDER THIS
STARSHIP'S
MAIN
ENGINE.

I DON'T KNOW
IF THE EXPLOSIVE
FORCE OF BLASTOFF
WILL BE ENOUGH--

--TO SEND
ME ON
THROUGH
TIME.

...BUT... I
HAVE... TO
TRY ::

BURROOOM

WITHIN SECONDS, TWENTY MILLION H'V'LER'NI
SOAR OFF INTO THE VOID, IN PURSUIT
OF THEIR DESTINY...

...LEAVING BEHIND THEM AN ALL-
BUT - ABANDONED CITY AND AN
EMPTY LAUNCH PAD.

AND, ELSEWHERE...

WHEN! THIS
DOESN'T GET ANY
EASIER DOES
IT?

WHERE AM
I THIS TIME?
LOOKS LIKE A
FAIRLY NORMAL
FOREST...

...AND THAT SOUNDS LIKE
HOOFBEATS! YES, AT
LEAST TWO HORSES--AND
RIDERS--APPROACHING
FAST!

GLOP-GLOP
GLOP-GLOP

GOD IS WITH US, SURE!
CAMELOT IS A'READY
IN SIGHT!

I DON'T
BELIEVE IT.
DID HE
REALLY
SAY...

GLOP-GLOP-GLOP



...CAMELOT???

Whate'er else ya do, miss not Superman #55...
guest-starring Stragen the Demon.

Nor shall ya miss Adventures of Superman
#478, lest the moon itself be forfeit!

Finally, return thee here in thirty days, when
Action Comics #665 shall "Wake the Dead!"



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Dear Editors:

Concerning ACTION COMICS #660, "Certain Death," I'd like to offer this correspondence. For one thing, it's great to see Superman back to full power. The Krisis of the Krimson Kryptonite "kaper" was fun reading, but four issues without an "up, up, and away" was frustrating.

"Certain Death" delivers the second death in the Superman books this year. First, Jerry White's untimely demise and now his illegitimate father, Lex Luthor, is laid to rest. But is Lex really gone? I perceive that the fat, corporate robber baron persona is indeed dead and buried, but my imagination ran wild as Lex climbed into the X-27 Lex-Wing wearing a familiar purple flight suit. Perhaps there is a concealed, technologically advanced laboratory in the Andes mountain range—one that could offer the "miracle worker" of the aerospace industry a chance to invent a rocket pack, and other high-tech paraphernalia to carry out his obsession of ridding Metropolis of Superman. Like I said, my imagination ran wild.

It's great to see the relationship between Clark and Lois blossoming toward a wedding ceremony. The scene of Superman flying with Lois was fun. Keep up the fantastic work and the Superman books will be "flying" off the comic racks for years to come.

Kevin J. Conley
Methuen, MA

We hope that doesn't include the hardcover Archive Editions as well, Kevin; they're likely to put someone's eye out!

Dear Michael:

Re: ACTION COMICS #660. A metal hand and a charred seat do not a body make. LEX LIVES! (Ya can't fool me!)

Charlie Harris
Tucson, AZ

Dear Super-Team:

I am going for the coveted Baldy Award here. Hope I'm not too far out on a limb, in ACTION COMICS #660 Lex Luthor dies in a plane crash. Whether it is a suicide is left up in the air. But Lex is pretty clearly dead—at least as dead as anyone can be in comics. But I have figured it out! I have deduced how Lex Luthor will return!

It is clear that Dr. Kelley still has some feelings toward Lex. And she is a bright woman, intelligent enough to dope out all the scientific projects LexCorp undertakes. And she has high clearance in the organization, so she is likely privy to all of those projects. And she is a doctor, so she likely has a sample of Lex's cells somewhere. Add all these together and what do you get? Dr. Kelley will use LexCorp's cloning device (last seen waaaaay back in MAN OF STEEL) to attempt to recreate a healthy Lex Luthor. Since the machine is less than perfect, however, the clone will be an imperfect (at best) duplicate of Lex. Dare I say...Bizarro-Luthor!!! Oh, I'm so clever! Oh, I can't wait!

Or maybe I'm wrong. But I would like to see that Bizarro-machine again someday, and I hope this is it. Can't wait to find out.

Oh, by the way...Clark getting engaged is a great idea. Superman as a bridegroom is a fantastic concept. Will this be a long engagement (say, until SUPERMAN #100) or a brief one? Will Clark mention his other job before the wedding (like Ray Palmer did to Jean Loring) or will he keep it secret even after the wedding (like Barry Allen and Iris West)? And just between you and me, don't you think that Clark and Lana made a better couple than Clark and Lois make? Oh, our Kansas farmboy has grown up and gone urban...Sigh.

Ali T. Kokmen
Providence, RI

No Baldy.

Dear Mike:

Luthor is dead? Come now, could this be a ploy to bring Brainiac back? Maybe he'll want revenge and resurrect Lex, just to make him suffer through life again.

What will become of LexCorp? Everyone knows Luthor kept it together. Will any of his "relatives" turn up to take over? How will Metropolis cope with the loss of such a "great" man? Even though LexCorp had its hand in evil dealings, the company employs thousands of people in Metropolis.

Luthor's death is unfortunate for Superman lovers. He has been the only enemy who could make the steel hairs on the back of Superman's neck stand up. Nobody can replace Lex. He was a villain, yet a friend to the public. He was an archenemy of Superman, yet throughout the series

they only traded blows once. Let's remember Lex Luthor in the years to come. A great man, possibly, but he was certainly the best foe a guy could have.

Justin Pollack
Woodbury, NY

P.S. In order to properly remember Lex, will he have a place in WHO'S WHO?

P.P.S. Why was Superman so regretful of Lex's death?

Lex will most certainly be in WHO'S WHO, Justin—#13 to be exact! And Superman, being the man that he is, would never wish death upon even his worst enemy.

Dear "Super-Creators":

I know I'm a bit late, but I had to comment on the "Death of a Fat Pig." In all honesty, I never thought you'd kill the son-of-a-beached-whale. I figured he'd get that round head of his mounted on that green armor he wore in the pre-Crisis days, but no... He's dead. And it disappoints me, too. Why? Because I feel that there are two very important words missing from the Luthor mythos. It's not "money bags," or "master villain." Definitely not "noble humanitarian" or "role model." No, Lex was bigger than all that (why do you suppose his clothes were tailored?). Two words would have made him more respected, distinguished, and handsome. These words are: cheap wig.

Eric Skudlarczyk
St. Francis, WI

Shame on you, Eric! We have no choice but to ask you to ponder the insensitive statements you have made concerning the physical appearance of someone so recently departed. Think of the pain you may have caused Mr. Luthor's family...Oh, they haven't found any family yet. Well, how about his friends? Hmmm, none of them either.

Okay, Eric, you've convinced us—your Baldy's on its way!

Dear Super People:

Just a quick note to thank you for the new numbering system on the monthly trilogy of Superman covers. Considering the continuity that runs between the three titles, that little tri-

angle on the cover was a stroke of genius. I'm one of many comics fans who get a monthly shipment of comics from a subscription service. It was confusing, trying to figure out which one to read first: I'd have to flip through each comic, find the "NEXT ISSUE" blurb at the end of the letter column, and then decipher from there which title got read first. Now, of course, a simple glance at the covers and I'm all set.

No comments on specific storylines—I'm still being entertained, so continue with what you're doing. I just wanted to let you know that somebody at DC had one heck of a good idea. Thanks!

Michal Jacot
East Tawas, MI

Oh, please, oh, please, oh, please
let Jenette or Dick read this issue...

Dear Mike & Roger:

I really enjoyed ACTION COMICS #660, "Certain Death," but as I was reading it, several rules of comic book death ran through my mind.

1. Don't believe any character is dead until you see a body.

2. Don't believe any character is dead even if there is a body.

3. Even if you see the character die, examine the autopsy report, are present when it is burned, then spread those ashes over the Atlantic, don't believe that character is dead. Even if the body is diced, sliced, nuked, and disintegrated to the nth degree it doesn't mean the character is dead. They always get better.

The only characters ever to remain dead in the DC Universe are Bruce Wayne's parents. Marvel has a much worse track record. I think Bucky Barnes is the only character not to rise from Marvel death. Not that this is always a bad thing. While I wouldn't mind Lexy doing a little time in the big house for some of the stunts he's pulled, he's too well written a character to die of radiation poisoning or a plane crash. I hope he'll be cared for by Peruvian monks or something, then be back soon to wreak havoc in Metropolis. Plus, rule #1 applies here: no body.

The entire "Death of Luthor" storyline has been beautifully handled by the Super-team, from Luthor's discovery of his mortality right up to his crash in the Andes. Nice job. Now get him back.

Jerry Smith
Covington, KY

Dear Mike:

Ah, so Lex Luthor dies in ACTION COMICS #660 and the mysterious Mr. Z is "re-introduced" in SUPERMAN #51. Please, please, please, let my guess be right, Lex isn't dead. Don't deprive us of the greatest arch-nemesis of all time.

You see, the "new" version of Luthor is more than a villain; in many ways he is a hero, as well. If Guy Gardner can be considered a hero and yet have so many vices it boggles the mind, then Luthor is the inverse; a "bad guy" with more virtues than many a hero. He is intelligent in a very rare form, both theoretical and practical, he is brave, generous, and even loyal at times. Even his concern for Lois's mother seems genuine. Lex's love and grief for Jerry is real, and his willingness to conceal the fact that he was his father confirms that love. Clearly we have here a man who could be a world-class hero.

We can't lose Luthor! Bring back the monster who tempts innocent country girls into a life of despair. Bring back the archfiend who makes the Joker look like a run-of-the-mill criminal nut. Bring back the enigma that would send an army into a ghetto to wreak mass destruction, only to build a hospital in the ruins. Bring back the only foe besides Brainiac who has any chance of beating Superman. Bring him back, I say!

Ah, he can't be dead. Mr. Z has got to be Luthor, he's got to be; you guys just aren't that stupid, are you?

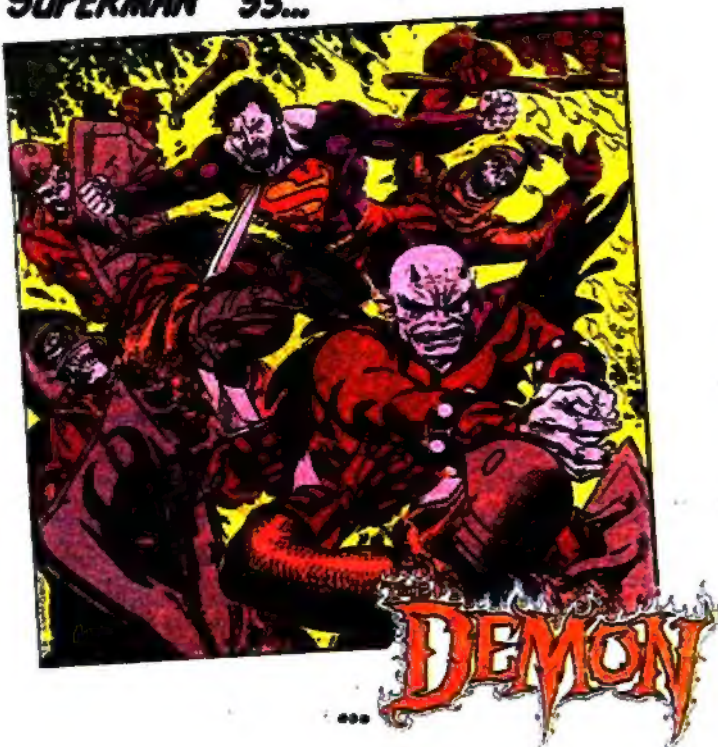
Randy Keefe
Bellingham, WA

No, Randy, Mr. Z is not Luthor, and no, we are not stupid. Tricky, sneaky, and downright treacherous at times, but definitely NOT stupid!

—Dan Thorland

Tricky, Sneaky and Treacherous, Inc.

NEXT WEEK IN SUPERMAN #55...



IN TWO WEEKS: in SUPERMAN #55, the Man of Steel meets the men of the Round Table when he finds himself stranded in Camelot! Will he be greeted as friend or foe? Join Jerry Ordway and Dennis Janke for "Time and Time Again" Phase Six. PLUS: another thrilling chapter of Karl Kesel's Newsboy Legion!

IN THREE WEEKS: in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #478 the explosive conclusion of "Time and Time Again"! Superman arrives in the 30th Century where the Legion of Super-Heroes enlists him in a desperate battle against a ruthless Dev-Em. The aftermath of this storyline will spill over into LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES, so don't miss it or you'll miss it all! By Dan Jurgens and Brett Breeding.

IN ONE MONTH: in ACTION COMICS #665 a tired Superman returns to present-day Metropolis at last! But there's no rest for the weary when the undead are walking the streets of Metropolis! Why are they looking for the Man of Steel and who is guiding them on a mission of revenge? Find out in "Wake the Dead," by Roger Stern and Bob McLeod.

This month's tasty cover was pencilled by Kerry Gammill, inked by Dennis Janke, and colored by Brett Breeding!

BEASTCHARMING

Perennially purveying a plenitude of purty, prettified pictures to my peerless pals!

**HUMBLE
CONTRIBUTOR TO
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Queries? Requests? Contact me at
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Pledged to scan all series great and small...